

## Fire Safety Basics

- Keep matches and lighters out of view and out of reach of children. Lock them up!
- Use child-resistant lighters.
- Teach children to tell an adult if they find matches or lighters.
- Remove fire hazards and temptations from your home.
- Watch your children closely.
- Teach children not to play with candles.
- Teach children to never use the stove or microwave without an adult.
- Make sure your home has working smoke detectors. Check them monthly.
- Practice your home escape plan with your family at least once a year.



## Firesetting Facts and Myths

### **Myth:**

It is normal for children to light fires.

### **Fact:**

Children's curiosity about fire is common, fire-setting is not and it can be deadly. Children 8 years and older can be arrested for fire-setting/arson.

### **Myth:**

Telling a child not to touch matches and lighters is all a parent needs to do.

### **Fact:**

Parents need to make the home as safe as possible for children. Don't leave matches or lighters where children can find them. Lock them up! Talk to children about the dangers and consequences of setting fires.

### **Myth:**

Firesetting is a phase that my child will outgrow.

### **Fact:**

Firesetting is not a phase. It must be dealt with **immediately** or it will continue. Firesetting is against the law and it can lead to death.

### **Myth:**

Small fires are not a big deal.

### **Fact:**

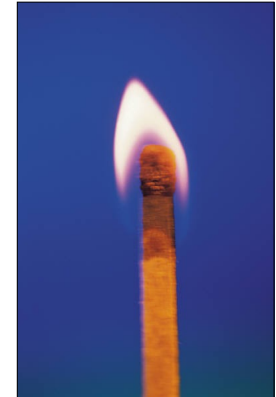
Fire of any size is a very big deal. Anytime a child sets a fire, they are endangering themselves and the people around them.

For more information please call the Mesa Fire Department at 480-644-2508



## Mesa Fire Department

### Firesetter Program



For more information on the firesetter program call the Mesa Fire Department at 480-644-2508

## THE FACTS ABOUT FIRESETTING

Fire demands respect. Playing with fire is very dangerous and can lead to death, severe burns, property damage or jail time. Fires are the number-one cause of death at home for children under six. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) estimates that two of every five of those children killed in home fires die in fires started by themselves or other young children. More than one of every eight fatal structure fires is by a child under age 15.

The number of fires started by children in Mesa increase every year. This is a problem that needs to be addressed by all community members. The Mesa Fire Department has developed an educational class that can address firesetting issues among children.



## IDENTIFYING FIRESETTERS

Firesetting is a serious problem. It can start at an early age and may continue into adulthood. Recognizing firesetting behavior early and taking steps can greatly reduce the risk of future firesetting incidences.

Most children are curious about fire, but those children who play with matches and lighters are putting themselves and those around them in great danger. Some children experiment with fire out of curiosity. These children usually have easy access to matches and lighters. They do not understand the consequences of their actions.

There are also children who experiment with fire because they are experiencing a crisis in their life. The crisis could be a result of moving, a death or divorce. Unable to express anger, sadness or abandonment, children sometimes turn to firesetting. These children will benefit from learning how to deal with their emotions in a more constructive positive manner, one that does not include firesetting.

Regardless of the reason for a child setting a fire, education is the most important step a parent can take to ensure their child's safety and teach children the dangers of fire.



## PROGRAM STEPS

### Referral to the program

A child can be referred to the Firesetter Program in a number of ways: the fire or police department, a parent, by a school official, the judicial system, etc. Classes are free of charge for children and their families. Parents are required to attend the classes with their child.

### Education

The child and the family are seen by a fire dept. educator for at least two one-hour classes. The fire dept. educator discusses the consequences of firesetting and how it could affect the community. All education material and videos are age

appropriate and designed to meet the needs of the child.

Children will be given homework after the first session to reinforce topics that were discussed.

### Evaluation

Contacting the family through mail is a necessary step in evaluating the progress of the child. Evaluations are mailed to the family two months and nine months after completion of the class.